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# THE Agricultural Situation

**FEBRUARY 1952**

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# Visualizing Feed Grain Needs

**I**NCREASING demand for feed grains during the past 2 or 3 years has been accompanied by heavy utilization, rising feed prices, and declining stocks. In view of this situation, special emphasis is placed this year on larger production of feed grains.

Meeting the 1952 production goal of 128 million tons—12 percent above 1951—will take more acres and higher yields than we had last year. Feed production called for is above that in 1949 and 1950, and has been exceeded only by the record crop of 1948.

Acreage goals call for an increase of nearly 9 million acres in the four feed grains. The corn goal of 89 million acres is 5.1 million above that planted in 1951. The barley goal is about 2 million acres above 1951, and the sorghum grain goal is up 1.6 million. No increase in the acreage of oats is called for, so as to leave more land available for higher yielding crops, especially corn.

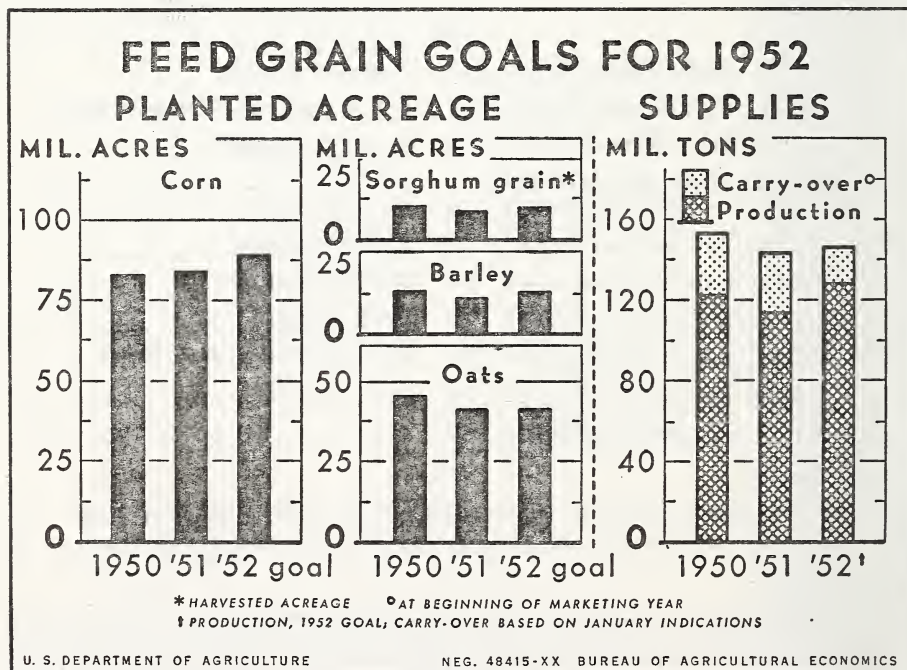
An even greater increase in acreage and production than called for in the

goals would be desirable to increase the size of feed grain reserves. But in view of the acreage needed for other essential crops, the goals have been set at such levels as will meet our feed needs for next season without further depleting reserve stocks.

In the recent 1950-51 feeding season, a little over 2 million tons were withdrawn from reserve feed-grain stocks, as more feed was used than was produced. An even greater withdrawal from reserves is expected in 1951-52, and stocks at the beginning of the 1952-53 season are expected to be down around a third below the 29 million tons at the beginning of the present season. Larger stocks would be desirable to serve as a cushion against possible crop failure and to insure stable feed supplies.

High-level production of all grass and forage crops also is emphasized. Goal for tame hay calls for about the same acreage as in 1951.

Malcolm Clough, BAE



# South Can Aim for Higher Yields in Balanced Program

THE INGENUITY of southern farmers will be challenged if they are to produce their share of needed agricultural commodities in 1952. Not only is there an urgent need for another large crop of cotton, but production goals call for about as much tobacco, peanuts, rice, sugar cane, and truck crops as in 1951. At the same time more feed and pasture will be needed for the increased numbers of livestock on southern farms. On the other hand, some production supplies, particularly fertilizer, may not be adequate to meet all the demands.

A good many southern farm people also will continue to move into non-agricultural jobs to help man an expanding industrial plant, which also is necessary to our National economy.

Under these circumstances the utmost efficiency in the use of production resources will be required if southern farmers are to produce their share of needed agricultural products. Efficiency in farm production in 1952 might well become our slogan.

Cotton is of strategic importance not only in our national economy, but also in that of our allies and other friendly nations. The carry-over of cotton on August 1, 1952, is likely to be one of the smallest on record. This coupled with the prospective strong export, civilian and military demands makes the production of a large cotton crop—16 million bales—of great national importance. Furthermore, if the production is much less than this quantity, cotton's future competitive position with respect to synthetics will be worsened.

## High Acreage Yields Needed

During recent years, cotton production has increased considerably in the far West. Most of our cotton, however, is still grown in the South. Southern farmers, therefore, are largely responsible for adequate supplies of cotton. Since many of the

## These Regional Stories

THIS year's production needs and some of the problems farmers will face in meeting them are discussed in four regional articles in this issue of the **Agricultural Situation**. To say that the Nation's corn is produced in the Corn Belt, that the cotton is all grown in the South, that all our wheat and beef cattle come from the West would be far from correct. Nor would one claim that the Northeast has a monopoly on dairy farming, poultry raising, or in the production of potatoes . . . even though these items are important there. But this is a year when all-out farm production is needed for defense against aggression and to aid in the preservation of world peace. And it is not enough merely to speak of what this country as a whole might produce. It may prove helpful to think a little also in terms of regional farm activities, and of crops that farmers in the regions largely contribute. The information in the four articles will be quite general; and the authors suggest reliance on State Extension workers, county agents, and members of Agricultural Mobilization Committees in the States and counties for specific local information on improved practices; and for advice on what crops to plant on particular farms.

production resources which can be devoted to cotton will be limited, obtaining high yields is of particular significance in 1952.

Cotton is produced over a large area and under greatly varying conditions. Each farmer, therefore, must take stock of his own production situation. Cotton acreage can then be fitted into practical and realistic farm-cropping plans rather than increasing it or decreasing it solely in accordance with estimates of supply and demand. The greatest total production of food and fiber from each farm is the most important consideration. Cotton acreage adjustments and practices will, and should, vary among areas and farms.

In areas and on farms where cotton has a high comparative advantage over other crops, it would appear advantageous for farmers to plant as much

cotton as their resources will permit, and to rely, to the greatest extent feasible, on labor saving devices. On many small farms cotton is the most profitable use of the land, and in many cases where the family labor supply is adequate farmers may find it feasible to increase their cotton acreage without reducing materially their production of other commodities. On some farms the cotton acreage in 1951 strained available land and labor resources. Operators of such farms might make a greater total contribution to food and fiber production by reducing their cotton acreage and using some of their land less intensively. In some instances "heavy overcropping" of the prospective labor force might lead to lower yields per acre, less efficient production, and actually less total production of cotton.

As in other recent years, most farmers who have a tobacco allotment will find it to their advantage to plant their full allotted acreage, and to continue to employ the high level of production practices which generally characterize the production of this crop.

Peanuts is an enterprise of southern farms almost exclusively. Acreage allotments for edible peanuts will be about 10 percent less in 1952 than in 1951. Therefore some adjustments in the acreage of edible nuts will be made. Some farmers may wish to continue to plant as large an acreage of peanuts in 1952 as in 1951 and sell the excess over allotment for oil, or hog them off. A large portion of the peanut farmers in the deep South grow both peanuts and cotton. These farmers should consider seriously increasing their acreage of cotton.

Large export needs for rice during and since World War II are primarily responsible for the demand for large quantities of rice from this country. Folks here at home aren't using much more than they used to. Rice acreage in the United States during the last few years has been about double that of the late 1930's. The future of our large export market in rice is dependent upon a continuation of the situation of inadequate supplies from southeast Asia. Rice farmers, particularly in the older areas, have worked their land and

water resources hard. They are having difficulty in maintaining yields and quality of rice. In 1952, some farmers may need to consider seriously the possibilities of longer rotations and the incorporation of supplemental enterprises.

### Forage Possibilities Hopeful

Livestock numbers, particularly cattle, have increased at a substantially faster rate in the South during recent years than in the country as a whole. The now well-established possibility of vastly increased production of high-quality forage from improved pastures in these sections of the South constitutes one of the bright spots in the current livestock and feed outlook for the country. The development of a substantial forage and livestock-based agriculture in these humid sections of the South appears to be in line with desirable long-time adjustments, both from the standpoint of increasing farm incomes and of land-resource conservation.

For southern farmers who plan a shift into livestock farming, as well as for those who want to increase livestock as a supplementary enterprise, it may be a good idea to grow somewhat slowly into the business. In this way the initial cost and risk can be held down while the operator gets more experience in livestock handling and pasture-forage production techniques.

In view of the tight national outlook for concentrate feeds, the southern dairy farmer, particularly, should give the most careful consideration to the practicability, within his own farming system, of placing greater emphasis upon high-quality pastures.

On many small farms agricultural production and income per worker are very low, regardless of the farming system used. The period immediately ahead, which promises to be one of high industrial activity with increasing off-farm employment opportunities, should help to solve this problem.

E. L. Langsford and  
Robert B. Glasgow

*Bureau of Agricultural Economics*

# Corn Belt to Play Big Part in Feed Production Gains

**D**WINDLING of reserve supplies of feed grains and mounting needs for livestock products for adequate food in the national defense program are big problems now confronting American farmers. And they are problems of special interest to Corn Belt farmers.

The supply of feed grains is adequate for prospective livestock production in 1952. But feed grains now are being used faster than produced. Consequently, farmers are faced with the problem of producing more feed or retrenching in their livestock enterprises in the near future. Any retreat in livestock production during continued high employment will make meat scarcer, push up prices, and feed inflation.

## Larger Acreage, Higher Yields

The challenge to Corn Belt farmers this year is to produce 10 percent more feed grains than they produced in 1951. Meeting the high goal set for feed grains means that every acre available for growing these crops in a balanced production program must be planted, especially corn. The production goals program suggests some reduction in the acreage of soybeans in the Corn Belt to allow expansion in the acreage of corn in areas where the yield is highest. Some substitution of corn for other crops is also needed. But as is well known, grasses and legumes are needed in the crop rotation to conserve the soil and to insure profitable production in future years. The 10 percent additional production of feed grains in the Corn Belt, therefore, should come from both a larger acreage and higher yields per acre.

Each operator of a Corn Belt farm should first select the most intensive cropping system suitable for each different kind of land in his farm, considering type of soil, slope of land, and depth of top soil. Then, all improved soil management and production practices that are known to boost acre yields of crops, including hay and pasture, should be put to work to the fullest extent that is practicable and profitable.

Improving fertilizing practices; using

good seed; seeding at proper rates and depths in a well-prepared seedbed; using new advancements in insect, disease and weed control; terracing and contouring; and using available modern machinery for doing the work at the best time, each would increase crop yields. Together these practices would raise yields appreciably in 1952 and considerably within a few years. Easily applied practices can be used to increase the carrying capacity of permanent pastures. Specific local information on better crop and pasture practices can be obtained from the county agent and other members of the County Agricultural Mobilization Committee.

## Per Acre Gains Feasible

Even though supplies of fertilizer, insecticides and new modern machines are likely to be limited, a focus of effort by Corn Belt farmers on yield-increasing practices for 1952 crops might increase their corn yields by one to two bushels per acre. Appreciable increases might also be made in yields of soybeans, oats, and hay crops. The usable portion of crops also can be increased by reducing harvesting and storage losses to a practical minimum. Experiments have indicated that from 5 to 15 bushels of corn may be left per acre in Corn Belt fields by the corn picker. Similar losses occur with a poorly adjusted combine. Much grain is also lost in storage.

Short supplies of feed can be made to go farther in feeding animals by good management in care and feeding and by marketing fattened animals at optimum weights or degree of finish. Farmers who do not keep their efficiency with hogs reasonably high may find 1952 a year of low returns from hogs if corn is charged to the hog enterprise at market prices. And cattle feeders with adequate quantities of good quality roughages and pasture can cheapen gains by combining a light grain ration with a maximum of harvested forage and pasture.

C. W. Crickman

*Bureau of Agricultural Economics*

# Dairy, Poultry and Potatoes in the Northeast

**N**ORTHEASTERN farmers generally will have price incentives to produce heavily this year but may find themselves handicapped at times and in varying degrees for lack of labor, feed, or other vital production items.

Dairy and poultry are the leading farm enterprises of the region and both are highly dependent on feed grains from other regions. What can Northeastern farmers do in case a tight national feed situation should develop? Dairy farmers would usually find it more profitable to maintain their herds rather than to reduce them. This could be done in the short run by reducing the concentrates fed per cow, preferably by reducing heavily the quantity fed to low producing cows. In the longer run the typical dairyman could produce more home-grown feed, largely by practices to improve crop yields. Either roughage or grain could be expanded. But on most Northeast dairy farms an increase in good quality roughage is likely to be the most profitable.

## New Harvesting Methods

Both the quantity and quality of hay and pasture crops can be improved by wider use of lime and fertilizer and other proven practices. The results will not be translated into milk production and income to the maximum extent, however, unless good harvesting methods and good grazing management are used. Weather during the harvesting season often makes it difficult in the northeast to make high quality hay by field curing. Mow drying and grass silage are now available as alternative methods. Any producer thinking of adopting these methods will need, of course, to consider the investment and operating costs. It would seem, however, that many Northeast dairy farmers might well consider these

methods seriously, at least as supplements to present methods.

Poultry farmers of the Northeast have fewer alternatives than dairymen in adjusting to a tight feed situation. They depend almost exclusively on grain and concentrates, opportunities to reduce feeding rates are not good, and few of them have the land or other resources for producing grain. They cannot substitute roughage for grain to any large extent and their main adjustment can only be one of reducing numbers and production. This can be done relatively quickly but at the same time will usually mean some financial loss to the producer, due to continuing overhead costs, if for no other reason.

Potato production could easily exceed requirements, possibly enough in some years in the absence of price supports to mean unprofitable operations, even to efficient producers. Good and poor years might tend to alternate much as in the twenties and thirties. The short 1951 crop is selling at good prices and many growers will want to expand production in 1952. Some of them may be handicapped by lack of financing and it may be difficult to obtain enough fertilizer, but the total acreage planted is very likely to exceed materially that of 1951. Production will depend also on yield but could easily be excessive.

What should the individual potato grower do in view of this prospect for 1952 and later years? This is a difficult question and the answer will vary from area to area and from farm to farm. Generally speaking, it would seem that the specialized growers should concentrate on low-cost production over a period of years. In some cases this might mean more acres of potatoes, in other cases fewer acres. In certain cases it might mean the adding of a livestock enterprise to make best use of available pasture and roughage. In nearly all cases it would mean the use of cultural practices that result in high yields of good quality potatoes and that will maintain or improve the productivity of the soil over the years. Producers growing small acreages of potatoes are much less numerous now than 10 years ago, but it would seem that those remaining might do well also to consider alternative enterprises.

M. S. Parsons

*Bureau of Agricultural Economics*

# Western Farmers to Continue Big Part in Production

**W**ESTERN FARMERS and ranchers are being called upon for a continuation of the high level of production of wheat, and an increase in the production of feed grains, hay, livestock, and livestock products in 1952 as their part in the defense mobilization program.

The 1952 National wheat production goal is 1,165 million bushels, to be grown on an acreage goal of 77.9 million acres. The production goal is 178 million bushels more than was harvested in 1951. But the acreage goal is 119 thousand acres less than were seeded for harvest in 1951. Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico farmers, who have had heavy abandonment of winter wheat the past 2 years, seeded 921,000 acres less than they planted in the fall of 1950. However the winter wheat acreage in other areas is high. The final wheat acreage goal is 900 thousand acres less than the goal of 78.8 million acres announced last July because of the reported favorable condition of the winter wheat crop. This means that spring wheat farmers can seed about 3 percent less wheat than they planted in 1951 and the 1952 National wheat acreage goal will still be attained.

Since a strong demand for livestock feed is expected in 1952 western farmers should carefully consider using any reduction in their wheat acreage—plus all other available land—to produce barley, oats, improved varieties of hybrid corn and other forms of livestock feed. With the large inventory of livestock on western farms and ranches and the low yields and poor quality of 1951 corn in the cash grain areas of Iowa, Nebraska and South Dakota, there appears to be little or no danger of producing too much feed grain in 1952.

To obtain increased production in 1952 farmers in the West, as elsewhere, will need to boost their per acre yields of crops. Yield on individual farms can be increased by using improved farming practices now proving profit-

able in the area. Immediate yield increases can be obtained by using good seed properly cleaned and treated, by seeding in good seed beds at recommended rates, and insofar as is practical and profitable, by controlling weeds, insects and disease. Crop rotation, contour farming and strip cropping are desirable practices that will increase yields. In certain areas of limited rainfall, summer fallow will boost wheat production. Timeliness of performing field operations is also an important factor in increasing crop yields. The farm operator who has not been using the improved practices recommended for his locality can well afford to try out some of those practices in 1952. Prospects for a prolonged period during which a high level of agricultural production will be needed suggests the planning of farming operations so that good crop yields can be maintained over a period of years.

## Better Practices, Profits

Cattle and sheep are major enterprises on western farms and ranches. With increasing consumer incomes and high demand for meat and wool, these enterprises offer the farm operator relatively good opportunities for favorable income in 1952, especially where he has feed and labor available. This is not the most favorable time, however, to establish a beef cow herd since prices for breeding stock are high. The large build-up of cattle numbers would indicate that a marked increase in marketings is inevitable. When it comes, cattle prices might be expected to start a downward trend.

Western pastures and ranges have been well stocked with cattle for the past several years, which means that western farm and ranch operators should turn their attention to recommended management practices that have proven profitable for their area in order to improve the quantity and quality of the feed supply, make possible

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# *A Letter*

## TO CROP REPORTERS

I HAVE JUST come back from a trip to Topeka, Kans., where the State Board of Agriculture was holding its annual meeting. In connection with the meeting, Roy Freeland, secretary of the State board, and Hubert Collins, the agricultural statistician for Kansas, had arranged for a meeting of crop reporters. The occasion was to recognize some 31 crop reporters who had served 35 years or more. One had been reporting for 52 years, and that covers quite a lot of developments in agriculture if you just stop and think about it a minute. Two men had served 49 years and another 47. There were 19 who had served 40 years or more, and 12 who had served between 35 and 40 years.

In the morning meeting there must have been close to 350 people who saw the presentation of Service Certificates. This was followed by a luncheon over at the hotel where more than 200 gathered to eat a good lunch and have a general

good time getting together. I have never run into so many crop reporters from such a wide area at one time.

I got quite a kick out of listening to fellows from all parts of the State exchanging ideas and experiences they had had in serving as reporters. All of them were certainly aware of the importance of their contribution to the crop-reporting service. And the most frequent topic I heard being batted around was how to get the best information on what was occurring in their neighborhood. I came in for some ribbing on the forecast, which is perfectly natural, but the reporters themselves all agreed they got some ribbing too from their neighbors and others for their appraisal. So we all ended up in the same boat.

I know I had a swell time, and from the number of reporters who said the same thing, it certainly seemed like a wonderful time to all of us. The people in the State Department of Agriculture had a fine program, and I expect that similar annual meetings will be held in the future.

S. R. Newell, Chairman  
*Crop Reporting Board, BAE*

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### *Continued from page 7*

more efficient gains, and reduce stock losses to a minimum. Good pasture and range management, better quality hay, adequate winter rations including protein supplement and minerals, proper care at calving time, use of good sires, careful selection of replacement stock, and control of external parasites, brucellosis and other diseases, will all help to increase production per cow and make cattle a more profitable enterprise.

In many western areas a little protein supplement and good quality hay or roughage through the severe winter months will keep cows in better condition for calving and give a larger crop of stronger calves. Some cattlemen are using salt as a control in self-feeding protein supplement to beef cows on the range. Salt is mixed with the supplement in the desired proportions thus assuring that each animal gets its share of protein. At the same time it saves

considerable labor. Since cheapest gains are obtained from pasture, it is advisable to avoid overfeeding as well as underfeeding during the winter.

Although cattle are now in a relatively strong position, sheep production appears to have a somewhat better outlook for the long pull, considering the demand for lamb meat and wool. Breeding ewes in the United States declined from an all-time high of 37.4 million in January 1942 to a 31-year low of 20.8 million in 1950. They are now on the increase with 21.1 million reported January 1951. And a further increase is probable.

A few western sheep ranchers are fencing their better ranges in order to lick the labor problem. Some of the other factors responsible for the decline are also being whipped. Better methods have been developed to control internal and external parasites, vacci-

*(Continued on page 10)*

# How Our Land Is Used

## Changes Take Place As Result of Increasing Needs, and Improvements on the Land

ONE-FOURTH of the land area of the country is cropland and over half is in open permanent pasture and woodland grazing. The remainder is in forest and miscellaneous other uses. More than 60 percent of the total area, or 1,158 million acres, is in farms. The farm land includes all the cropland and much of the pasture and woodland, but about 40 percent of the grazing land is outside farms. Most of the grazing land outside farms is public land.

During the last 5 years an average of about 7 million acres more land has been used for growing crops than during World War II. This increase was brought about by plowing up pasture and grazing land, and as the result of clearing, drainage, and irrigation. These new estimates of major uses of land are based on studies of land use by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics and preliminary figures from the 1950 Agricultural Census.

In round numbers, the present distribution of the land area between major uses is as follows: Cropland, 463 million acres; wild hay, 15 million; open permanent pasture, 630 million; woodland and forest, 607 million (including about 335 million acres of woodland pastured); special uses and miscellaneous other areas, 190 million acres. The 48 States contain a little over 1,905 million acres of land.

## How Cropland Is Divided

Of the total cropland area available of 463 million acres, 368 million acres were used for planted crops in 1949; 70 million acres were pastured, and 25 million acres in other classes, including some cover and soil improvement crops, not harvested or pastured, and the idle cropland. An additional 15 million acres of wild hay were harvested; thus making a grand total of 478 million acres. Since wild hay land generally is not well adapted to other field crops it

is not included here in the total cropland area available for cultivation.

Only about 80 percent of the 463 million acres now being used, or available, in the cropping rotations for raising field crops and rotation pasture can be called really good land for cultivated crops. Lack of fertility, steep slopes, and water either too much, or too little, are severe handicaps on 20 percent or more of the land in cultivation.

On the average, about 20 million acres of the available cropland in various parts of the country is idle every year for reasons such as wet weather, drouth, lack of capital, soil erosion, or lack of fertility. Much of the idle land could be improved by erosion control, planting cover crops, clearing brush, or by drainage where too wet, or by irrigation where too dry for crops.

## Pasture and Grazing Land

Including pasture and grazing land in farms and not in farms, we have some 620 million acres in open permanent grassland pasture and grazing land and 300 to 350 million acres of woodland and forest suitable for grazing some part of the year. An additional 75 to 80 million acres of planted fields are estimated to be pastured at sometime during the year, including fall and winter pasturage of small grain, and after harvest pasturage of wheat, hay, and cornstalk and stubble fields. The acreage of crops pastured varies from year to year, depending on the weather and the amount of crop residues available. Over 90 percent of this billion or more acres of pasture and range is now being used for some period every year.

At present over one-third of our feed for livestock comes from pasture and grazing land. The yield per acre, however, is low compared to cropland. Large areas furnish pasturage only a few weeks at certain seasons of the year. Over one-third of the grazing land is publicly owned. Much of it can only be used for grazing as it is not suitable for cultivated crops or other

# Major Use of Land

Continental United States, 1950<sup>1</sup>

Land Use	Acreage	Percent of total
In farms:	Million acres	Percent
<b>Cropland:</b>		
Cropland cultivated <sup>2</sup> -----	368	19.3
Cropland pastured-----	70	3.7
Other cropland-----	25	1.3
<b>TOTAL AVAILABLE FOR CROPS</b> -----	463	24.3
Wild hay-----	15	0.8
<b>TOTAL</b> -----	478	25.1
<b>Pasture:</b>		
Permanent pasture-----	416	21.8
Woodland pastured-----	134	7.0
<b>TOTAL</b> -----	550	28.8
<b>Woodland Not Pastured</b> -----	85	4.5
<b>Other Land</b> <sup>3</sup> -----	45	2.4
<b>TOTAL LAND IN FARMS</b> ---	1,158	60.8
Not in farms:		
Grazing Land <sup>4</sup> -----	415	21.8
<b>TOTAL LAND USED FOR AGRICULTURE</b> -----	1,573	82.6
<b>Forest and Other Land</b> <sup>5</sup> ---	332	17.4
<b>Grand Total Land Area</b> ---	1,905	100.0
<b>TOTAL LAND NOT IN FARMS</b> -----	747	39.2

<sup>1</sup> Preliminary estimates of major uses of land in continental United States based on data assembled in the Land Use Inventory Project, BAE; including preliminary releases from the 1950 census of agriculture to January 1, 1952; and preliminary reports of the Land Grant College, USDA Agricultural Productive Capacity Study, 1951.

<sup>2</sup> Cropland used in the preceding year 1949, from the date of the enumeration (1950).

<sup>3</sup> Farmsteads, feedlots, roads, lanes, ditches, and miscellaneous other areas in farms.

<sup>4</sup> Land not in farms estimated to have been actually pastured or grazed at some time during the preceding year 1949. The grazing land not in farms is about one-half grassland and one-half woodland and forest. It is estimated that some 25 to 30 million acres of additional land contain some areas of grass and other forage of value for grazing that were not used during the year.

<sup>5</sup> Other land not in farms includes 75 million acres of urban areas, industrial sites, parks, road and other rights-of-way and other special use areas; approximately 200 million acres of commercial forest land; and about 57 million acres of miscellaneous other land areas, including barren land, rock, sand, marshes, etc.

intensive use. Even though pasture and grazing lands have been improved by seeding and other practices, increased production from pasture has been less rapid than from cropland in recent years.

About one-third of the land area, or over 607 million acres, is covered by farm woodlands, commercial forests and other forested areas, exclusive of forests in parks and other special use areas. Slightly over three-fourths is commercial forest land, while the remaining fourth is chiefly valuable for fuel wood, posts, cover, and grazing. Over one-third of the forest land or 215 million acres is publicly owned under either, Federal, State, or local government administration. Details on major uses of land in continental United States as a whole are shown in the accompanying table.

## Land Used for Agriculture

The acreage of land used for crops and livestock production in 1950 totaled 1,573 million acres, or over four-fifths of the total land area of the country. About 1,250 million acres, or two-thirds of the total land area, were used more or less exclusively for crop and livestock production. In addition, was woodland and forest subject to grazing, farm woodland, and miscellaneous other farm areas.

Of the total land area, 332 million acres is not used for agriculture. This is composed of forests, urban and special use areas such as parks, wildlife refuges, highway, road and railroad rights-of-way, and military reservations.

H. H. Wooten

Bureau of Agricultural Economics

## Western Farmers ...

(Continued from page 8)

nation against overeating is now possible, and some progress has been made toward better control of predatory animals.

With the increasing shortage of farm labor, sheep production has the best opportunity for expansion as farm flocks. The operator who has the labor and facilities should consider either es-

tablishing a farm flock or expanding his present sheep enterprise. Farm flocks of sheep have proven profitable on western irrigated farms where good quality alfalfa hay and other roughages are available. Farm and ranch operators will find that good sheep management practices recommended for their locality will increase production and prove profitable.

Charles W. Nauheim

Bureau of Agricultural Economics

# Who Climbs to Ownership?

## Farm Tenure Changes Revealed in Loan Records

FOR years now, since 1930, the census figures have shown a decline in the percent of farm tenancy. Farm tenancy today is the lowest in this century.

This is good news for a nation that has a strong belief in widespread individual ownership of land. But the census figures still leave some gaps in our knowledge. They give us the number of tenants in the United States in 1945, and show the number of owners in 1950. However, they do not tell us how many of the 1945 tenants have become owners since then. The number of owners do not increase by the same amount as the number of tenants declines. And statistically we never know which tenants become owners.

A recent study of information collected on farmers who receive loans and guidance in farm and home management from the Farmers Home Administration throws some light on this matter.

It also supports the belief that given financial assistance and help in im-

proving their farming systems, tenant farmers race to attain a place they can call their own.

The report shows that one out of five tenant borrowers who repaid their loans during 1950, and continued farming, became an owner during the time he received supervised credit assistance. One of every three FHA borrowers who acquired ownership had the assistance of a Farmers Home Administration tenant-purchase loan. The remainder acquired ownership of their farms by other means.

Here are the details of the progress toward ownership of the operating loan borrowers who retired their debt to the Government in 1950. Forty-two percent were tenants or sharecroppers and 15 percent were not farming at the time of receiving their loans. See table I.

The group not farming included farm laborers, sons of farm operators and veterans with farm background but who were not actually operating farms at the time they applied for loans.

### I. Tenure Status "Before and After"

Tenure	Crop year before acceptance		Crop year 1949	
	Number families	Percent	Number families	Percent
Owner.....	10, 198	36. 7	13, 165	47. 4
Part owner.....	1, 832	6. 6	2, 513	9. 1
Tenant.....	9, 855	35. 5	11, 369	40. 9
Sharecropper <sup>1</sup> .....	1, 766	6. 4	708	2. 6
Not farming.....	4, 104	14. 8	0	0
Total.....	27, 755	100. 0	27, 755	100. 0

<sup>1</sup> Sharecroppers reported for Southern area only.

At the time of leaving the program 47.4 percent of the 27,755 families were owners, 9.1 percent part owners, and 43.5 percent tenants or sharecroppers.

During the three to five years that these Farmers Home Administration borrowers had been receiving supervised credit assistance, 1,969 of the 11,621 tenants and sharecroppers became full owners and 443 became part-owners. Also, as shown in table II, one-fourth or 1,012 of the 4,104 families not farming before receiving their loans were owners when they completed their final payments. Without credit assistance supplemented with

guidance in improving the efficiency of their farm and home operations, it is probable that only a few of the families in this group would have improved their tenure position. The 3,424 who moved from nonownership to ownership is a small portion of the total number of farmers who became owners during the period 1945-50. But their progress indicates what can be done to help farmers climb the ladder to ownership.

A. T. Mace

M. H. Williams

*Farmers Home Administration*

## II. Tenure Figures Broken Down —Shifts Made From Various Groups

Original Tenure Groups (crop year before acceptance)		Tenure on Leaving Program (crop year 1949)		
Tenure	Number Families	Tenure	Number Families	Percent
Owner.....	10,198	Owner.....	9,866	96.8
		Part-owner.....	290	2.8
		Tenant.....	42	.4
		Sharecropper <sup>1</sup> .....	0	.0
		Total.....	10,198	100.0
Part-owner.....	1,832	Owner.....	318	17.3
		Part-owner.....	1,477	80.6
		Tenant.....	36	2.0
		Sharecropper <sup>1</sup> .....	1	.1
		Total.....	1,832	100.0
Tenant.....	9,855	Owner.....	1,641	16.7
		Part-owner.....	428	4.3
		Tenant.....	7,752	78.7
		Sharecropper <sup>1</sup> .....	34	.3
		Total.....	9,855	100.0
Sharecropper .....	1,766	Owner.....	328	18.6
		Part-owner.....	15	.8
		Tenant.....	869	49.2
		Sharecropper <sup>1</sup> .....	554	31.4
		Total.....	1,766	100.0
Not farming.....	4,104	Owner.....	1,012	24.7
		Part-owner.....	303	7.4
		Tenant.....	2,670	65.0
		Sharecropper <sup>1</sup> .....	119	2.9
		Total.....	4,104	100.0

<sup>1</sup> Sharecroppers reported for southern area only.

# More Trucks and Tractors ... Little Change in Farm Autos

## Combines and Corn Pickers Double and Triple

**N**UMBERS of most power machines on farms are now at record high levels. Preliminary estimates for January 1, 1951, show that there were 3,940,000 tractors of all types on farms. This is about 1.5 million more than in 1945. Preliminary figures from the 1950 Agricultural Census and other reports provide a basis for estimating machine numbers for 1951, and for revising estimates of recent years.

From 1948 to 1951 tractor numbers increased by about 960,000, or an average annual increase of about 320,000 units. This was the largest increase so far reported for any 3-year period.

Farm motor trucks, estimated at 2,280,000 for 1951 exceeds the 1945 number by about 790,000 units. Numbers of farm automobiles, on the other hand, have shown little change since 1930. It is believed that on many farms automobiles are being replaced by motor trucks, especially pick-up trucks. The number of automobiles, and to a lesser extent tractors and motor trucks,

would have been larger in 1951 but for the reduction in the number of farms since 1945.

More than 800,000 combines were estimated to be on farms on January 1, 1951—more than double the 1945 number. The combine is now used for more than 85 percent of the total small grain harvest.

The increase in number of mechanical field-type corn pickers on farms from 1945 to 1951 was more than 200 percent. From 1948 to 1951 about 225,000 corn pickers were added to farms. The increase in this 3-year period exceeded the total number on farms in 1945.

Number of farms with milking machines on January 1, 1951, is estimated at about 650,000. Increase in number of farms with milking machines was especially large from 1944 to 1948—a 275,000 increase during this 4-year period.

A. P. Brodell

*Bureau of Agricultural Economics*

**Principal machines on U. S. farms January 1, 1910—1951<sup>1</sup>**

Year	Tractors				Autos	Motor-trucks	Grain combines	Field corn pickers	Number of farms with milking machines
	Wheel including home-made	Crawler	Garden	Total					
	Thou-sands	Thou-sands	Thou-sands	Thou-sands	Thou-sands	Thou-sands	Thou-sands	Thou-sands	Thou-sands
1910.....				1	50		1		12
1920.....				2246	22,146	2,139	4	10	55
1930.....				3,920	34,135	2,900	61	50	100
1940.....				1,545	4,144	3,047	190	110	175
1941.....				1,675	4,330	1,095	225	120	210
1942.....				1,885	4,670	1,160	275	130	255
1943.....				2,100	4,350	1,280	320	138	275
1944.....				2,215	4,185	1,385	345	146	300
1945.....	2,255	99	68	2,422	4,148	2,190	375	168	2365
1946.....	2,374	106	80	2,560	4,260	1,550	420	203	440
1947.....	2,500	113	122	2,735	4,350	1,700	465	236	525
1948.....	2,700	121	159	2,980	4,225	1,900	535	299	575
1949.....	2,980	133	202	3,315	4,290	2,065	620	372	610
1950.....	3,259	144	216	3,619	4,208	2,209	714	456	637
1951.....	3,531	154	255	3,940	4,210	2,280	810	522	655

<sup>1</sup> "Facts for Industry" reports of the Bureau of the Census, annual registrations of motor vehicles, and results of enumerative surveys were used in developing estimates for years and machines not covered by census reports. <sup>2</sup> Census figures. <sup>3</sup> Census figures. The average date of the census in these years was about April 1. <sup>4</sup> Preliminary census figures. The average date of the 1950 census was about April 1.

# Outlook Highlights

... FEBRUARY 1952

**T**HIS YEAR'S production goals call for larger feed crops so as to provide for more livestock production. They ask for 15 percent more corn, 26 percent more grain sorghums, and 14 percent more barley. Combined production goals call for total farm output about 6 percent above 1951 or nearly 50 percent above the 1935-39 average.

Restrictions on materials will reduce construction activity in 1952. However, the recent rate of new housing starts probably will be maintained in most of the first quarter. Further cut-

backs on use of critical materials will reduce passenger car production and output of other consumer durables in the first half of the year. No serious shortages are expected. In general, the price outlook is on the strong side.

Consumers, business, and the Government together spent 16 percent more money in 1951 than a year earlier. About half this gain came from larger quantities of goods and services, with higher prices doing the rest.

Consumer incomes rose about 5 billion dollars in the last quarter, but higher taxes got about 2 billions of it. Consumer spending went up a little less than disposable income, and the high rate of personal savings rose slightly.

In the year just past, prices paid by

(Continued on page 16)

## Prices of Farm Products

[Estimates of average prices received by farmers at local farm markets based on reports to the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Average of reports covering the United States weighted according to relative importance of district and State]

Commodity	5-year average		Jan. 15, 1951	Dec. 15, 1951	Jan. 15, 1952	Effective parity price Jan. 15, 1952 <sup>2</sup>
	Base period price <sup>1</sup>	January 1935- December 1939				
Basic commodities:						
Cotton (pound).....cents.	\$ 12.4	10.34	\$ 41.38	40.34	38.70	34.35
Wheat (bushel).....dollars	3.884	.837	2.09	2.22	2.20	2.45
Rice (cwt.).....do	1.95	1.65	\$ 5.57	4.93	5.14	5.60
Corn (bushel).....do	\$ .642	.691	1.54	1.69	1.68	1.78
Peanuts (pound).....cents.	\$ 4.8	3.55	10.9	10.4	10.4	13.3
Designated nonbasic commodities:						
Potatoes (bushel).....dollars	\$ 1.12	.717	\$ .980	1.93	2.07	\$ 1.73
Butterfat in cream (pound).....cents	26.7	29.1	70.2	75.7	79.9	76.6
Milk, wholesale (100 lb.) <sup>4</sup> .....dollars	1.68	1.81	\$ 4.69	5.19	5.16	4.82
Wool (pound).....cents	21.0	23.8	98.0	62.7	61.3	60.3
Other nonbasic commodities:						
Barley (bushel).....dollars	\$ 6.19	.533	1.27	1.38	1.42	\$ 1.45
Cottonseed (ton).....do	26.40	27.52	101.00	71.50	70.10	75.80
Flaxseed (bushel).....do	1.65	1.69	4.25	4.24	4.02	4.74
Oats (bushel).....do	\$ 3.99	.340	.882	.949	.938	\$ .944
Rye (bushel).....do	\$ 7.20	.554	1.48	1.73	1.71	\$ 1.69
Sorghum, grain (100 lb.).....do	\$ 1.21	1.17	2.10	2.51	2.54	\$ 2.85
Soybeans (bushel).....do	1.00	.954	2.90	2.83	2.78	2.87
Sweetpotatoes (bushel).....do	.902	.807	1.94	\$ 3.07	3.47	2.59
Beef cattle (100 lb.).....do	7.36	6.56	27.00	27.50	27.20	21.10
Chickens (pound).....cents	10.7	14.9	24.3	23.4	25.1	30.7
Eggs (dozen).....do	\$ 21.5	21.7	42.6	51.1	40.5	\$ 50.7
Hogs (100 lb.).....dollars	7.49	8.38	20.00	17.60	17.40	21.50
Lambs (100 lb.).....do	8.09	7.79	30.00	28.50	28.20	23.20
Veal calves (100 lb.).....do	8.26	7.80	30.80	31.30	31.50	23.70
Oranges, on tree (box).....do	\$ 2.29	1.11	1.26	1.27	.85	\$ 3.54
Apples (bushel).....do	.991	.90	\$ 2.16	2.16	2.33	2.84
Hay, baled (ton).....do	\$ 11.87	11.20	22.60	24.40	25.50	\$ 28.00

<sup>1</sup> A adjusted base period prices 1910-14, based on 120-month average January 1942-December 1951 unless otherwise noted.

<sup>2</sup> Parity prices are computed under the provisions of title III, subtitle A, section 301 (a) of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1938 as amended by the Agricultural Acts of 1948 and 1949.

<sup>3</sup> 60-month average, August 1909-July 1914.

<sup>4</sup> 10-season average 1919-28.

<sup>5</sup> Transitional parity, 85 percent of parity price computed under formula in use prior to Jan. 1, 1950.

<sup>6</sup> Prices received by farmers are estimates for the month.

<sup>7</sup> Preliminary.

<sup>8</sup> Revised.

# Economic Trends Affecting Agriculture

Year and month	Industrial production (1935-39=100) <sup>1</sup>	Total income of industrial workers (1935-39=100) <sup>2</sup>	Average earnings of factory workers per worker (1910-14=100)	Wholesale prices of all commodities (1910-14=100) <sup>3</sup>	Index numbers of prices paid by farmers (1910-14=100)			Index numbers of prices received by farmers (1910-14=100)			
					Commodities	Wage rates for hired farm labor <sup>4</sup>	Commodities, interest, taxes, and wage rates	Livestock and products			
								Dairy products	Poultry and eggs	Meat animals	All livestock
1910-14 average.....	58	50	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
1915-19 average.....	72	90	152	158	149	147	148	147	153	162	157
1920-24 average.....	75	122	221	160	159	181	168	159	163	121	140
1925-29 average.....	98	129	232	143	151	184	161	161	155	145	152
1930-34 average.....	74	78	179	107	117	121	124	105	94	83	91
1935-39 average.....	100	100	199	118	124	121	125	119	108	117	115
1940-44 average.....	192	237	315	139	148	211	152	169	145	166	162
1945-49 average.....	186	317	431	204	219	407	229	264	213	291	265
1950 average.....	200	369	516	236	246	425	255	247	181	340	278
1951 Average.....	219	-----	-----	263	271	470	281	284	226	411	335
1951											
January.....	221	416	556	263	262	450	272	286	203	391	323
February.....	221	419	556	268	267	-----	276	285	205	425	340
March.....	222	427	563	269	272	-----	280	280	217	428	343
April.....	223	427	565	268	273	479	283	273	215	428	340
May.....	222	424	562	267	272	-----	283	270	221	418	335
June.....	221	429	567	265	272	-----	282	269	217	422	335
July.....	212	420	560	262	271	475	282	272	222	414	332
August.....	217	426	561	260	271	-----	282	277	231	416	336
September.....	219	429	570	259	271	-----	282	283	247	411	337
October.....	218	425	568	260	272	476	283	294	247	410	340
November.....	219	424	569	260	274	-----	284	305	249	387	332
December.....	218	-----	-----	260	273	-----	284	314	233	379	328
1952											
January.....	-----	-----	-----	-----	275	498	287	316	200	376	320

Year and month	Index numbers of prices received by farmers (1910-14=100)								All crops and live-stock	Parity ratio <sup>6</sup>
	Crops									
	Food grains	Feed grains and hay	To-bacco	Cotton	Oil-bearing crops	Fruit	Truck crops	All crops		
1910-14 average.....	100	100	100	100	100	100	-----	100	100	100
1915-19 average.....	193	161	183	175	201	126	-----	171	164	111
1920-24 average.....	147	125	189	197	155	157	7 152	162	150	89
1925-29 average.....	141	118	169	150	135	146	145	143	148	92
1930-34 average.....	70	76	117	77	78	98	104	84	88	71
1935-39 average.....	94	95	172	87	113	95	95	99	107	86
1940-44 average.....	123	119	241	138	170	150	164	145	154	101
1945-49 average.....	222	205	378	240	289	216	206	234	250	109
1950 average.....	224	187	402	280	276	200	185	232	256	100
1951 average.....	243	220	436	335	339	193	239	264	302	107
January.....	240	214	442	347	374	192	324	275	300	110
February.....	254	222	440	351	379	204	333	283	313	113
March.....	245	221	437	359	386	202	265	276	311	111
April.....	247	222	438	363	385	209	225	275	309	109
May.....	244	223	438	357	380	194	239	271	305	108
June.....	240	217	438	353	358	200	189	263	301	107
July.....	236	213	438	329	317	175	204	252	294	104
August.....	234	215	430	291	294	207	181	244	292	104
September.....	233	216	423	283	288	201	161	239	291	103
October.....	239	219	445	304	296	188	171	247	296	105
November.....	249	224	424	345	307	172	249	267	301	106
December.....	253	233	440	339	309	177	331	280	305	107
1952										
January.....	251	234	431	325	303	171	337	277	300	105

<sup>1</sup> Federal Reserve Board; represents output of mining and manufacturing; monthly data adjusted for seasonal variation.

<sup>2</sup> Computed from data furnished by Bureau of Labor Statistics and Interstate Commerce Commission on payrolls in mining, manufacturing, and transportation; monthly data adjusted for seasonal variation. Revised January 1950. <sup>3</sup> Bureau of Labor Statistics.

<sup>4</sup> Farm wage rates simple averages of quarterly data, seasonally adjusted. <sup>5</sup> Revised.

<sup>6</sup> Ratio of index of prices received to index of prices paid, interest, taxes, and wage rates. This parity ratio will not necessarily be identical to a weighted average percent of parity for all farm products, largely because parity prices for some products are on a transitional basis. <sup>7</sup> 1924 only.

# Outlook Highlights

(Continued from page 14)

farmers (including interest, taxes and farm wage rates) averaged 281 percent of the 1910-14 average, up 10 percent from 1950.

## Farm Income

Cash receipts from farm marketings in 1951 totaled 32.8 billion dollars—14 percent more than in 1950. Receipts from livestock and products, totaling \$19.7 billion, were up 22 percent; from crops, totaling \$13.1 billion, were up only 4 percent. Receipts in January, this year, were up 9 percent from a year earlier.

Farmers' realized net income totaled 15 billion dollars in 1951, up 2 billion from the postwar low in 1950, but still 2 billion less than the postwar high in 1947. Nonagricultural income, on the other hand, set a new record high in 1951, up more than a third from its 1947 level.

## Livestock and Meat

Total meat production in 1952 is expected to be moderately larger than in 1951—most of the increase to occur first half of the year.

The 5.1 million cattle on feed January 1 were 11 percent more than a year earlier; a higher proportion also had been on feed over 6 months. Number of sheep and lambs on feed, while relatively small, is 15 percent above last year. Moderately larger meat supplies than last year may result in somewhat less upward pressure against retail price ceilings, but do not point to any pronounced changes in 1952 averages compared with 1951. Prices of better grades of cattle may decline somewhat seasonally this winter and spring. Prices of hogs will probably strengthen in the weeks ahead.

## Poultry and Eggs

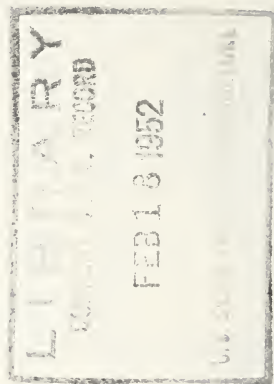
Mid-January price received by farmers for eggs was 40.5 cents per dozen compared with 42.6 cents a year ago. The lowest monthly price in 1951 was 41.4 cents, in February. The egg-feed ratio in the next few months is likely to

continue below last year. The result is very likely to be a decline in the number of chickens raised for laying flock replacement.

## Feed-Grain Disappearance

Disappearance of feed grains is expected to continue comparatively heavy during the remainder of the present (1951-52) feeding season, and carry-over stocks into the 1952-53 season probably will be around a third smaller than at the beginning of the present season.

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